



The 12th Edition

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Twelfth Air Force Airmen help, learn lessons during exercise



Staff Sgt. Karin Tomasik

(Center) Senior Airman Jessica Henry, 27th Medical Operations Support Squadron medic, maintains contact with Army Sgt. George Ruf, who is carried by soldiers and Airmen during a medical exercise in El Salvador. All members deployed in support of New Horizons - Joint Task Force Para Los Niños, a joint humanitarian readiness exercise providing schools and clinics for the people of El Salvador. The exercise took place February-May 2005.

By Airman 1st Class Carole Brabham
27th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Twelfth Air Force Airmen from Cannon Air Force Base, N.M., traversed the globe recently to spend time aiding the citizens of countries in the southern hemisphere that are less fortunate than their own.

One such humanitarian mission included approximately 10 weeks in El Salvador as part of the New Horizons Joint Task Force.

The operation, dubbed "Para los Niños," or "For the Children," was a mission to provide medical and educational facilities and care to the local citizens.

Senior Airman Jessica Henry, a 27th Medical Operations Squadron medic, provided medical support to Air Force and Army active duty, Guard and Reserve civil engineers who constructed schools as part of the New Horizons exercise.

Civil Engineer equivalents from El

Salvador's 5th Army Brigade also aided with construction and security.

"We lived in tent cities and ate MREs [Meals Ready to Eat], like any other deployment, but it was different because we weren't in a very hostile environment," Airman Henry said. "We spent time with those kids every day, and they loved us."

According to Airman Henry, a medic is trained as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), but is not a doctor. She was on hand to provide help with emergency situations such as heat exhaustion or even the loss of a limb, and was the sole medical support for the nearly 45 constructionists at her site.

Tech. Sgt. Gene Presciti, 27th Aero-medical Dental Operations Squadron, says what he remembers most about the deployment is the enormous smiles he saw on the local children's faces.

"To be honest, I'm not sure whose lives were impacted more, theirs or mine," Sergeant Presciti said. "We take so much

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**Congratulations to
12th Air Force's newest
major selects**

Brian Baude
Kelly Burt
Brian Collord
Raymundo Estrada
Donald Gregson
Cassie Gorr
Eric Trismen
Gilberto Vasquez

Airmen renovate chapel, bring in new toys



Staff Sgt. Angela Borum

Airman 1st Class Terrence Williford, 612th Combat Plans Squadron, puts together toys at the base's Dove Chapel May 19. Members of the 612th CPS renovated the Dove Chapel playroom to make the stay of young children more pleasant and enjoyable. The work of the 612th CPS provided the children of the local community with upgraded toys and furniture. The 612th CPS Airmen also cleaned and painted the chapel. The renovated playroom is being used by chapel attendees as a safe and convenient place to leave their children during chapel services. Members of the 612th CPS are frequent volunteers, their last project was Habitat for Humanity.

Medics

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for granted at times, such as water and plumbing, or basic health and dental care, even Motrin. These things are truly cherished in El Salvador.”

Sergeant Presciti said the average El Salvadoran military member who worked with them at the site earned \$5 per day, before having money taken out for food and healthcare.

During the deployment, he worked at one of the local medical clinics where he was welcomed with open arms.

“I can’t even begin to go into detail how standard the medical care is there. Let’s just say that after being there, I believe we should all feel blessed and thankful about the standard of care we receive at the 27th Medical Group,” he said.

By all accounts, the deployed Cannon Airmen describe the mission as positive and educational.

Airman Henry wasn’t even supposed to go on the deployment, but was tasked close to the departure date due to medical problems with the original Airman slated for the deployment. She left behind a six-month-old baby to take part in “Para los Niños,” and although she said that was difficult, she was consoled by the fact that she was helping people.

“Probably for the first few weeks I was there, I was so sad because of how poor these people are. There isn’t much work there. They mainly cut down sugar cane; that’s their main export, so only one person per household usually worked,” she said. “The av-

erage income was \$3 a day, and they had no shoes, little food, and were living practically in aluminum cans. So it meant a lot to me to help these people. It gave me an inexplicably great feeling.”

Chaplain (Capt.) Mark McKellen, a chaplain with Cannon’s Community Chapel who deployed to El Salvador as well, also noticed the poverty in the region.

“One of the things that really struck me was the construction of most of the homes in El Salvador,” Chaplain McKellen said. “A great deal of them were made with mud and sticks.”

Airman 1st Class Bryan Nelson, a Cannon Community Chapel chaplain’s assistant, expressed similar observations and feelings of the deployment.

“This was my first deployment, so it was a true training and learning experience for me,” he said.

“I must say I have been very humbled by the way American and El Salvadoran cultures differ and how blessed we really are to live in a thriving country. It made me feel great and made me appreciate what the military does in humanitarian missions.”

The Cannon chaplain’s assistant accompanied Chaplain McKellen to El Salvador to provide spiritual care, support and morale to the deployed troops there. Each week, the chaplain coordinated outings for the troops on Saturday, their “morale day.”

“I put together trips like going to the largest mall in Central America in San Salvador, the capitol, hiking the volcano, which I was told was no longer active, deep sea fishing trips and organizing basketball games between deployed U.S. personnel and host nation personnel. We also visited Mayan Ruins,” Chaplain McKellen said. “I was highly impressed with the de-

ployed med techs from Cannon,” he said. “Not only did they provide quality medical care, but they also jumped in and became a part of the construction as well.”

According to Sergeant Presciti, the chaplain’s support was extremely important to the welfare of the troops.

“The actions of these two individuals really made a difference over there,” he said. “With working more than 72 hours a week in extreme weather conditions and having only one day off per week, I believe everyone looked forward to a little time off. These days were morale boosters that kept us going. I would be remiss in not saying that their efforts were greatly appreciated.”

Airman Henry agreed and said that the chaplains provided tremendous support, not only with spiritual and religious guidance, but morale and fun as well.

“The chaplains were there longer than us, and although they weren’t involved in building, they were definitely involved in morale,” she said.

The Cannon Airmen all expressed similar sentiments of the welcoming atmosphere the locals provided, and of the feelings they felt upon completion of their operations in El Salvador.

“It was a wonderful feeling knowing that hundreds of children would now be able to attend a local school in their community. While we were there, more than 30,000 El Salvadorans received medical care. Now, there are three additional clinics that will also benefit hundreds of people in San Vicente,” Chaplain McKellen said.

“The locals were wonderful hosts. Many of them had tears of joy as the construction was taking place.”

Congratulations

Congratulations to 12th Air Force warriors who recently were – or soon will be – promoted to the rank indicated and to those who were recently awarded medals or plaques recognizing their accomplishments.

Promotions

Airman 1st Class

Mark Meister, 612th Air Communications Squadron
Nicholas Souders, 612th ACOMS
Robert Struck, 612th ACOMS

Senior Airman

Jonathan Haley, 612th Air Intelligence Squadron
Adria Winlock, 25th Operational Weather Squadron
Keele Curteman, 12th Air Force Force Protection
Jennifer Farrington, 612th ACOMS

Staff Sgt.

Brandon Titus 25th OWS

Tech. Sgt.

Alejandron Solis, 612th AIS

Awards

Air Force Commendation Medal

Tech. Sgt. John Hayes, 12th Air Force Manpower

ACC Training Manager of the Year

Staff Sgt. Andrus Whitehead, 25th OWS

12th AF Quarterly Awards

Fourth Quarter - 2004

Capt. Nichole Mayo, 25th OWS
CGO of the Quarter
Ms. Ruby Johnson, 612th ACOMS
Junior Civilian of the Quarter
Mr. Jim Knoll, A-36
Senior Civilian of the Quarter

First Quarter - 2005

Airman 1st Class Eric Jaegar, 25th OWS
Airman of the Quarter
Master Sgt. Kenneth Gammons, 612th ACOMS
SNCO of the Quarter
Mrs. Christine Creasy-Klein, 612th Combat Plans
Squadron, Junior Civilian of the Quarter



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